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SECURITY INFORMATION

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

## DEFECTOR RECEPTION CENTER

COUNTRY Poland

DATE DISTR. 30 Sept 53

SUBJECT Living Conditions in Wroclaw

NO. OF PAGES 4

PLACE  
ACQUIRED 25X1A  
[REDACTED]

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NO. OF ENCLS.  
(LISTED BELOW)DATE  
ACQUIRED BY SOURCE [REDACTED]SUPPLEMENT TO  
REPORT NO.

DATE OF INFORMATION [REDACTED]

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1. The city of Wroclaw had a population of about 250,000. Of this number, there were about 3,000 Jews and about 5,000 Russian civilians and their families. On the northern outskirts of the city were located the villages of Soltysowice, Polanowice, Maly Rakow, and Widawa.
  2. The average width of the River Oder in Wroclaw was about 100 m. Traffic on the Oder consisted of cutters, tugs, and barges of Polish, Czechoslovak, and German origin--recognized by their flags and the names on their bow. Most of them were Polish. Sometimes river traffic ceased in December and January because of ice. Near the north-east border of the city flowed the River Widawa. This river was about 30 m. wide, and had an average depth of 4 m. It flowed in a north-easterly direction at an approximate speed of three meters per minute. The bottom of the river was soft, black mud to a depth of about 30 cm. Beneath this was a heavy, hard clay. For a description of bridges in Wroclaw, see RC-1507, 31 July 1953.
  3. A pine forest, which was about 40 years old, extended for about 40 km. NE of the city. I do not know its width. There were also parts of the forest where the trees were about 15 years old. This forest was not dense; there were some clearings in it with no trees at all. South of the city the terrain was level, but the land was hilly and densely wooded 30 km. south of the city. The city itself, however, was level with a few small hills.

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4. In the spring (which usually began in April) temperatures were about 15° C. Very often it snowed as well as rained so that the days were mostly cloudy and wet. During the day, temperatures ranged between warm and cool, but the nights were very cold. The summers were cool with frequent rains. The winds were light. Most of the days were cloudy. Although the days were mostly cool, the temperature occasionally rose to 40° C. The fall was usually damp and rainy with rather high winds. The nights were very cold; there were frequent hailstorms and early, light snows. Winter was wet and cloudy. When it did snow, the snows were light, but for the most part it rained, and sometimes for weeks at a time. Rain usually immediately followed snow, and the winds very often reached a velocity of 15 m. per second. Night temperatures averaged about 12° C.
5. The city was divided into zones or districts (Dzielnicy). I do not know how many zones there were, but I know the names of only the following zones:
- a. Karlowice, located in the NE part of the city, and comprised mostly of gardens, had relatively few homes.
  - b. Rozanka, located in the northern part of the city, also had relatively few homes and mostly gardens.
  - c. Krzyki, located in the southwest part of the city, was still about 95% destroyed from World War II.

Prostitution was very prevalent in the central part of the city.

6. Most of the streets in the city of Wroclaw were paved with a very hard stone or brick. The width of the streets averaged about 12 m. The paved streets were electrically lighted on both sides. For the most part, the roads were in good condition; I saw little street repairing. The roads in the northern part of the city and on beyond the city limits were in good condition although they were not well tended or much used; weeds were beginning to grow between the bricks of the roads.
7. The main roads to the city were from Trzebnica, (about 30 km. northwest of Wroclaw), Psie Pole (about 4½ km. northeast of Wroclaw), and Jelenia Gora (about 86 km. northwest of Wroclaw). These roads were generally referred to as the Trzebnica Road, the Psie Pole Road, or the Jelenia Gora Road, respectively. The road leading to Psie Pole was paved with hard brick for about 1½ km. Beyond this, it was asphalt. It could accommodate about three automobiles abreast. The roads leading to Trzebnica and to Jelenia Gora were asphalt and could accommodate three automobiles abreast.
8. The main railroad station was located south of the center of the city. The entrance of the railroad station led to a lobby where tickets were sold and other business of the railroad was carried on. Entrance to the railroad station's main tunnel that led to the various waiting platforms was gained by means of a railroad ticket or a platform ticket which one could buy for 1.20 zlotys. Some people, [REDACTED] bought platform tickets with the intention of riding the train without payment of fare. Tickets were sold to all parts of Poland at this station. Price of a ticket for about 150 km. was about 30 zlotys. The presentation of one's personal identity documents was not necessary when purchasing tickets. Only those who bought tickets at reduced rates, such as railroad employees, members of the military, or Security Police (UB) members, were required to present personal identity papers. I believe these reductions were as much as 50%. Students' reductions amounted to about 23%.

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9. The main tunnel of the railroad station branched off in a series of 12 tunnels numbered from 1 through 12 on one side, and branched off in a series of 12 tunnels numbered from 1-A through 12-A on the opposite side. These tunnels led to the train platforms. As to train schedules, [REDACTED] the train to Poznan made seven runs daily. This included the express, the normal travel, and the faster than normal travel.
  10. City transportation included local buses painted a dark red. Destinations were printed in white on a black background. Buses that went outside the limits of the city to the neighboring villages were a dark red with a white horizontal stripe around the middle. Tickets could be bought on the bus or in the bus station. Streetcars traveled in trains of three and were dark red in color with the entrance in the rear and the exit in front. The number of the streetcar was printed in white on a black background on the front. (Number 8 went to the village of Karlowice.) Conductors were usually girls. Taxis were all old Polish vehicles. They were in various colors, but mostly black. Taxi fare from the village of Karlowice to the main railroad station, a distance of about eight kilometers, was 24 zlotys.
  11. I have no knowledge about office buildings. I only know of the Peoples' Hall (Hala Ludowa) which was located in the eastern part of the city. This was a large auditorium with a seating capacity of about 15,000. It was used mostly for theatrical productions. In the front of the Peoples' Hall was a large, tripod-type steel tower about 102 m. high. I do not know for what this tower was used because there were no lights, cables, or wires attached. This tower was commonly referred to as iglica and could be seen from a long distance.
  12. The houses were numbered consecutively; on one side of the street, for example, there appeared numbers from 1 to 10, while on the other side of the street there appeared numbers from 11 to 20. Factories did not have numbered addresses. All that was necessary was the name of the factory and the name of the street.
  13. Permission to establish residence in a city depended on employment or on a health certificate issued by a state-employed doctor. After arrival in the city one had to report to the Housing Office and present an employment card or health certificate. Travelers or visitors were allowed to remain in the city for three days. Documents were issued by the Citizens' Police (Milicja Obywatelska - MO).
  14. The easiest place to find employment was with the office for the rebuilding of the city. The most difficult place to find work was in the factories because there seemed to be an over-supply of people who wished to work in factories. In order to apply for work, one had to be at least 18 years old. The person was required to write two complete autobiographies and be interviewed with regard to political beliefs. A school and birth certificate as well as a residence card had to be presented. If one quit his job without permission, he was given no further employment. One could quit his job if he had permission to leave the city, or if he was given a medical certificate. The average worker earned 500 zlotys per month, and worked from 0700 to 1530, six days a week; he received double pay for overtime work.
  15. Besides the use of regularly employed workers to clean up the ruins, prison labor was also used for this purpose. I do not know from which prison these people were or what crimes they committed. All the prisoners were men. There was a guard who watched over them; probably an Army guard.

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16. A month's vacation with pay was given to those who had worked for one year in one place of employment. Very few people left the city on their vacations because they could not afford it even though a monthly deduction was made from their earnings for a state-sponsored vacation fund. I do not know how much was deducted from the earnings, but I believe the money was not refunded when the people did not take advantage of this vacation fund. I do not know if this fund included transportation to the place of vacation. There were several state-controlled tours and excursions to resorts, etc.
17. I would estimate that 99% of the books published carried Communist themes. The books were dull and heavy reading in which few took any interest. The Universal Communist Bolshevik Party - WKPB (Wszechwiazkowa Komunistyczna Partja Bolszewikow - WKPB) contained biographies of some of the better known Party leaders as well as a listing of the world wide contributions made by the Party. Most of the books were translated from Russian.
18. Daily newspapers were the Trybuna Ludu, Sztandar Mlodych, Zielony Sztandar, Rolnik Polski, Gromada, Wolnosc, Ziornierz Wolnosci, Ekspres Wieczorny, and the Chlopska Droga. Papers delivered to the houses were paid for before the first of each month. Payment was made to the postman. I have never seen any foreign newspapers.
19. All gymnasiums and universities had military courses as part of the regular academic programs. All students, both male and female, were required to take these courses. These courses were not part of the Service to Poland (Sluzba Polsce - SP) training. The teachers were Army officers from the Officers' Infantry School No. 1 in Wroclaw who earned 12 zlotys per hour for teaching. The courses taught were gas mask procedure, arms, military theories, bayonet practice, drill, topography, and military mathematics.
20. Service to Poland applied only to people between the ages of 16 and 21 who did not attend any educational institution. I do not know what training was given to SP members, but they became members of SP Brigades for three months out of the year where they underwent military training. I do not know what these paramilitary groups would be expected to do in time of war.

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